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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,223	07/03/2003	Nobuo Kasahara	239873US2	5757
22850	7590	03/17/2005	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			BRASE, SANDRA L	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
			2852	

DATE MAILED: 03/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/612,223	KASAHARA, NOBUO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sandra L. Brase	2852	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 November 2004.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 1-34 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 35-39 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/10/04.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 35 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Iida et al. (US 6,577,837).

3. Iida et al. (...837) disclose an image forming apparatus comprising a photoconductive element (1a, 1b, 1c and 1d), an intermediate image transfer body (50) to which a toner is transferred from the photoconductive element and a fixing device, where the fixing device comprising: a conveying belt (22) held in contact with the intermediate image transfer body to thereby form a nip for image transfer (col. 13, line 60 – col. 14, line 17; and figures 1 and 2), and a rotary heating member forming a nip for fixation in contact with the conveying belt (col. 12, lines 41-65; col. 14, lines 14-17; and figures 1 and 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iida et al. (US 6,577,837) in view of Russel (US 4,537,493).

6. Iida et al. (...837) disclose the features mentioned previously, but do not disclose the claimed sucking means and canceling means. Russel (...493) disclose a sucking means for causing a conveying device to suck a sheet (col. 5, lines 27-57), and a canceling means for canceling a condition in which the sheet is sucked by the conveying belt (col. 5, lines 55-57). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the claimed sucking means and canceling means, as disclosed by Russel (...493), since such a sucking means aids in the conveyance of a sheet and such a canceling means enables the sheet to be detacked from the conveyor.

7. Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iida et al. (US 6,577,837) in view of Nakashima et al. (US 6,745,002).

8. Iida et al. (...837) disclose the features mentioned previously, but do not disclose the claimed bias voltage applying means. Nakashima et al. (...002) disclose an image forming apparatus comprising a bias voltage applying means for applying a bias voltage, which is opposite in polarity to a voltage for secondary image transfer supplied to the intermediate image transfer body, to a conveying device (figure 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the claimed bias voltage applying means, as disclosed by Nakashima et al. (...002), since it is well known in the art to have such a claimed bias voltage applying means to transfer an image to a conveyed sheet.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 1-34 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 35-39 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Final Rejection

11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra L. Brase whose telephone number is 571-272-2131. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur T. Grimley, can be reached on 571-272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sandra L. Brase
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

March 10, 2005